**Week One - Part 1.3 – Reflection on 5306**

**Self –Assessment**

EDLD 5306 was a very interesting class. I have always had an interest in technology and have felt proud of my knowledge and use of technology. This class made me realize what a gap there is in the “digital immigrant” such as me and the “digital native” that I am currently teaching in my class. I also realized what a disservice many teachers are doing to their students by not being open to changes to include technology in the classroom. I myself fall short of what I should have been offering students. It made me realize that we need a paradigm shift in the design of lessons in the classroom.

I knew there were TEKS for the grade levels but had never actually taken the time to look them up to see what they were. Our students attend a computer class during the week and I just never gave thought to looking up the information myself. After doing so, I am very concerned that our students are not covering all the TEKS that they should be covering.

As a classroom teacher I have been filling out the STaR survey but did not really know what was done with the information gathered. It was very interesting to view our district’s data and I was concerned with the low ratings on some areas. I was however mollified that we were not the only district with low scores. I did not realize that there was a state or national Long-Range Plan for Technology. I was in awe of how extensive the plans were and how the authors could envision the world of the 21st Century Learner and what they would need for their future when it is changing so rapidly.

**Learn as a Learner**

As I completed the assignments I was overwhelmed with information. I soon learned that my technology skills were not as extensive as I had thought. I was grateful to have been required to learn new technology skills such as creating and using a blog and wiki. I was excited to make an Animoto, as I had only recently learned how to create one.

I gained a better appreciation of Web 2.0 collaboration tools and the endless possibilities that they offer. Using the discussion boards as well as our wiki and blogs was an experience that I could use to build my own knowledge of Web.2.0 tools, and how to better implement them in the classroom. My husband has often talked of his own experience working on his MBA, all the group projects that were required, and how much he gained from the collaboration to complete them. I now understand firsthand what he has been saying; that much can be gained from collaborative work. “When illustrating the importance of technology in schools, advocates often provide examples of how students use technology to learn. However, it is important to remember that technology can make valuable contributions to education even when one step is removed from the classroom. In other words students also benefit indirectly when educators use technology to enhance their own productivity and professional practice.” Wilson, J., & Redish, T., (2009)

**Lifelong Learning Skills**

Through this class I learned how important it is for me to immerse myself in technology and its uses. I have always considered myself to be quite competent in the use of technology. I would not have considered myself a digital immigrant before starting this program. I can see how I am firmly labeled a digital immigrant now. While I do not fear implementing technology in my classroom, I realize I firmly have my feet planted in the world of print. I printed out all the articles so that I could read and highlight manually what I needed as well as make notes to the side where I felt the need. I ordered all textbooks to allow myself the same luxury. I am an avid reader for pleasure and love the feel of a book in my hand. I would be the first person to tell you that I would never own a Nook or Kindle. I have recently received an Ipad through a grant and downloaded the ebook application. I now have twenty books on the device and now cannot imagine going back to traditional printed books unless I can’t find it through the digital format. If I were to start this program today I think I would purchase my books through the digital format.

I have never been afraid of trying new things but do not always go out of the way to do so. This program has made me step outside of my box. It has helped me to see that if you do not actively seek new information you are going to be left farther and farther behind. Our world is changing exponentially and to move slowly forward is to actually be behind. I have gained new skills and confidence in my ability to catch up to the new digital age.

It is my goal that when I finish this program that I will spend even more time working on my technology skills, researching new tools, and ways to implement technology into my classroom. “The project approach –more than traditional instruction- requires teachers to be learners.” Boss, S. & Krauss, J. (2007) I will continue to learn.

**References**

Boss, S. & Krauss, J. (2007)Real Projects in a Digital World, *Principal Leadership,* 8(4), 22-26

Wilson, J. & Redish, T. (2009) ISTE’s Technology Facilitations and Leadership Standards,

International society for Technology in Education